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- e) receiving, at a local expander, an original isochronous data packet from a host controller:
- f) forwarding said original isochronous data packet from said local expander to a remote expander over a signal distribution system;
- g) receiving, at a remote expander, said forwarded original isochronous data packet; and
- h) delivering said forwarded original isochronous data packet to at least one peripheral device.
- 6. A method as claimed in Claim 4 additionally comprising the following steps after step (b) of Claim 4 namely:
  - i. Determining whether said local expander already possesses said requested isochronous data:
  - ii. Generating a synthetic data packet if no such requested isochronous data is present; and
  - iii. Delivering said synthetic isochronous data to said host controller.
    - 7. A method as claimed in Claim 4 additionally comprising the following step after step (c) of Claim 4, namely:
    - i) Storing the address of the [requested] peripheral device at said remote expander unit; and further comprising the following steps after step (d) of Claim 4, namely:
  - i) Retrieving the address of said [requested] peripheral device at said remote expander unit; and
    - ii) Adding said retrieved address to said requested isochronous data.
    - 8. A method as claimed in Claim 4 wherein vestigial packets are removed from the system, said method comprising:
      - i) Detecting when a new frame has begun;
      - ii) Examining the properties of each packet buffer;
    - iii) Determining whether the data packet contained in said examined packet buffer has been stored for at least one complete frame period;
  - iv) Discarding said [contained] data packet if said [contained] data packet has been stored for at least one complete frame period; and
    - v) Repeating steps (i) through (iv) for each packet buffer in the system.
    - 9. A method as claimed in Claim 1 wherein said data stream is a non-time-relevant data stream.



- 25. A method as in claim 1 wherein said signal distribution system utilizes wireless transmission.
- 26. An apparatus for transmission of a digital signal over an extended distance comprising:

a local expander comprising means for receiving a request for a data signal from a host controller which host controller is connected to said local expander;

means in said local expander for generating an outgoing transmission signal;
means in said local expander for sending said outgoing transmission signal, [which signals are] which outgoing transmission signal is sent over a signal distribution system;

a remote expander comprising means for receiving said outgoing transmission signal; means in said remote expander for generating a digital signal from said outgoing transmission signal;

means in said remote expander for forwarding said digital signal to at least one peripheral device, which peripheral device is connected to said remote expander;

means in said remote expander for receiving inbound digital signals from said peripheral device[s];

means in said remote expander for converting said inbound digital signals to an inbound transmission signal;

means in said remote expander for sending said inbound transmission signal to said local expander, [which signals are] which inbound transmission signal is sent over said signal distribution system;

means in said local expander for receiving said inbound transmission signal; means in said local expander for generating a digital signal from said inbound transmission; and

means in said remote expander for forwarding said digital signal to said host controller.

- An apparatus as claimed in Claim 26 wherein said data signal is a time relevant data signal.
- 28. An apparatus as claimed in Claim 27 wherein said time relevant signal is a digital signal which conforms to the USB Specification; and said time relevant signal represent isochronous data.
  - 29. An apparatus as claimed in Claim 28 wherein said local expander additionally comprises:

means for storing said inbound signal as a stored inbound signal;
means for analysing said digital signal from said host controller to recognize a
subsequent request for transmission of said time relevant digital signal; and



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means for sending said stored inbound signal to said host controller in response to said subsequent request.

- 30. An apparatus as claimed in Claim 26 wherein said digital signal is a non time-relevant signal which conforms to the USB Specification; and said non time-relevant signal represents asynchronous data.
- 31. An apparatus as claimed in Claim 30 for transmission of a digital signal over an extended distance comprising:
- a) a local expander comprising means for receiving a request for a non time-relevant data signal from a host controller which host controller is connected to said local expander;
  - b) means in said local expander for generating an outgoing transmission signal;
- c) means in said local expander for sending said outgoing transmission signal to a remote expander, [which signals are] which outgoing transmission signal is sent over a signal distribution system;
- d) a remote expander comprising means for receiving said outgoing transmission signal;
  - e) means in said remote expander for generating a digital signal from said outgoing transmission signal;
  - f) means in said remote expander for forwarding said digital signal to at least one peripheral device, which peripheral device is connected to said remote expander;
    - g) means in said remote expander for receiving inbound digital signals from said peripheral device[s];
  - h) means in said remote expander for converting said inbound digital signals to an inbound transmission signal;
  - i) means in said remote expander for sending said inbound transmission signal to said local expander, [which signals are] which inbound transmission signal is sent over said signal distribution system;
    - j) means in said local expander for receiving said inbound transmission signal;
  - k) means in said local expander for generating a digital signal from said inbound transmission; and
  - means in said remote expander for forwarding said digital signal to said host controller.
  - 32. An apparatus as claimed in Claim 31 wherein said local expander additionally comprises:
- a) means for storing said inbound signal as a stored inbound signal;



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- b) means for analysing said digital signal from said host controller to recognize a subsequent request for transmission of said non time-relevant digital signal; and
- c) means for sending said stored inbound signal to said host controller in response to said subsequent request.
- 5 33. An apparatus as claimed in Claim 26 wherein said extended distance exceeds 5 meters.
  - 34. An apparatus as claimed in Claim 26 wherein said extended distance exceeds 30 meters.
- 35. An apparatus as claimed in Claim 26 wherein said extended distance is equal to or exceeds 100 meters.
  - 36. An apparatus as claimed in Claim 26 wherein said signal distribution system utilizes unshielded twisted pair (UTP) wiring.
  - 37. An apparatus as claimed in Claim 26 wherein said signal distribution system utilizes fibre optic cabling.
- 15 38. An apparatus as claimed in Claim 26 wherein said signal distribution system utilizes wireless transmission.
  - 39. An apparatus as claimed in Claim 26 wherein said host controller is a PC, and said peripheral device[s] is a camera, a mouse, a keyboard, a monitor or a speaker or speakers.
- 40. A method for transmitting a data stream between a host controller and a peripheral device over an extended distance; said method comprising:
  - a. feeding a first original, outgoing digital signal from a host controller to a local expander unit;
  - b. converting said outgoing digital signals into a converted outgoing signal having a format suitable for transmission over extended distances;
- c. transmitting said outgoing digital signal, as a outgoing transmission signal, over a signal distribution system;
  - d. receiving said outgoing transmission signal at a remote expander unit;
  - e. converting said outgoing transmission signal to said first original outgoing digital signal;
  - f. delivering said first original outgoing digital signal from said remote expander to at least one peripheral device;

